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DARKNESS.

"No light, but rather darkness visible."—*Milton.*

I.

Away with thee, Light! thou "effluence bright!"
Make room for my ebon car,
When it wheels on its track with hangings of black,
I curtain the Moon and the Star:
I love to go forth, with the storms of the North,
To follow the hurricane's sweep,
When the ships mounting high, ride up to the sky?
Then down to the fathomless deep.

II.

The lightning, it gleams, but I swallow its beams—
My kingdom it cannot control,
The fire-rent cloud I enwrap in my shroud,
And terror I strike to the soul;
I darken my scowl with the wind's loud howl
When God to the shipwreck'd speaks,
And his thunderings drown, as the ship goes down,
Their wild and unearthly shrieks.

III.

'Tis I who conceal the murderous steel,
The assassin's remorseless blow,
And I come with the slain, when with gory stain
He beck'neth his sleepless foe:
The murderer's path I beset with wrath,
Each sound I invest with dread,
Ev'n the "cloister'd flight" of the bird of Night
Can waken the ghastly dead.

IV.

When the world I've hush'd, with a face deep flush'd,
Some youth to his mistress hies,
Then wrapp'd in my veil, with her cheek deadly pale,
From her home and her friends she flies;
But, oh! when the scheme of her "love's young dream"
Is marr'd by a cold disdain,
In deep solitude, with me must she brood,
While her tears run down like rain.

V.

When the merciless Jew his Redeemer slew
And the vail of the Temple was rent,
The Earth felt my power "until the ninth hour,"
As I blacken'd the firmament;
Jerusalem shook and the graves were forsook,
Where the just and the sainted had lain;
With my mantle o'erspread, the disquieted dead
Walk'd forth 'mongst the living again.

VI.

In the sulphurous flake of Hell's dim lake,
I am "visible" 'midst the glare;
Those fires burn bright, but they shed no light*
In the regions of dark despair;
There floundering deep, the lost spirits weep
And gnash in their lasting pains,
Doom'd by the great Sire to the penal fire,
And bound in eternal chains.

* A dungeon, horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light ——————————

VII.

In the voiceless tomb, till the final doom,
I shall brood with my raven wing,
'Till the Saviour's breath shall cry unto Death—
"Oh, Death! where is thy sting?"
I shall sleep with the dead, in their last cold bed,
Where the worm is rioting free;
'Till the Power to save, shall say to the grave,
"Oh! where is thy victory?"

NUGATOR.

OUR NAVY.

[Below, we present our readers with some more "Scraps from the Lucky Bag." We need not repeat the commendations which we bestowed upon the author in our last. Those who feel an interest in the welfare of our gallant Navy, and who read the first number of "The Scraps," will not require any inducement to urge them to a perusal of this. We emphatically call the attention of the country to the statements and arguments therein presented. We wish our legislators to be awake to this subject. We would speak to every one of them, and say—see if nothing can be done in this matter for the welfare and honor of your country! We are almost disposed to say, that things have come to such a pass with us, that all the energies of the nation seem to be absorbed in the party-conflicts of the day, instead of being exerted for those great interests which press upon us from the right hand and from the left. We assure our fellow-citizens that there *are* other objects to be attained, beside that of electing a favorite candidate to the presidency. We believe that there are principles which need attention, as vital, and capable of as lasting effects, for good or evil to our land, as any that are involved in the political controversies of the day. We bid our countrymen look up for a moment from the dusty strife and the heated atmosphere of party warfare, and examine into the condition of those institutions which belong permanently to the country, and upon which its prosperity and its honor depend. We bid them look up, and see if "the matches" are not "lighted," and "the guns trained upon us," from a doubtful quarter; and then to say whether prudence and patriotism do not demand that our decks should be cleared and made ready for action. We deprecate the strife of blood. We cannot justify offensive war. But for the defence of our rights, our altars and our homes, on the land and on the sea, we should ever be prepared.

We speak earnestly, then, upon this matter, because we believe it to be one of vital importance. With party-politics, in our Editorial capacity, we have nothing to do—but here is ground upon which we can all meet as Americans. Here is a point where the banner of no party is raised—but the "stars and stripes" are fluttering in the wind—an alarm-gun has been fired—our Navy is reported to be in a needy condition—and we should gather under the standard-folds of our common country to consult, and to adopt measures for its safety and its dignity. We call, then, the attention of our National Legislature, of the Committee on Naval Affairs, of our fellow-citizens at large, to the following article. We trust that our correspondent will continue writing

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upon this subject, and lay every important "scrap" in "The Lucky Bag" before the eyes of his countrymen.]

Ed. Sou. Lit. Mess.

SCRAPS FROM THE LUCKY BAG.

NO. II.

To the Editor of the Messenger:

The "Scraps," Mr. Editor, which I have already sent you, go to show that all our ships at sea, taken together, do not carry as many guns as it is intended shall be mounted on only two forts built for the protection of a small town in your own State. Never since the war, has the force afloat been so disproportionate to the commerce of the country. And never have the calls for a larger Naval force been more urgent. State after State has been added to the Confederacy; population has been multiplied; resources developed, and commerce increased—until this last employs two millions of tons of shipping, manned by a hundred thousand seamen, and freighted with four hundred millions of property. The Naval force employed to give safe convoy to those men and their property, sailing to all parts of the world, I have shown, Mr. Editor, amounts, all told, to but six hundred guns.

If commerce were partial in its operations, or less national in its results, it might better comport with the interests of the public thus to slight it off. But, sir, for whom and for what purpose, let me ask, do these vast multitudes of ships and of men go down to the sea? I answer, for the purposes of commerce—that great artery in our national system, which diffuses health and vigor through this happy republic; which exempts you and every citizen, save those seamen, from direct taxation—filling the treasury with revenue; supplying the wants of the government; and ministering to the comforts as well as to the necessities of every member of society, from the seaboard to the Rocky Mountains—from St. John's and the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico and the Sabine. It is commerce that furnishes salt for the poor man's bread, and fills the rich man's goblet with wine. And every citizen is directly concerned, that ample protection should be afforded to that commerce; that in a time of profound peace, its channels should be unmolested—kept free and open to the American flag; and that that flag should, in all seas, and in every port, enjoy all the immunities and privileges of the most favored.

In showing up the feeble condition of the Navy, I still confine myself, Mr. Editor, to the interests of commerce in times of peace alone, and to the protection which it becomes the dignity and honor of the greatest nation, but one, in commercial importance, to afford to its citizens abroad. I have laid some stress on the great maritime interests of this country, and dwelt with emphasis on the puny force maintained in commission to protect them—puny indeed when compared to the service required. And though a condition of profound peace, and the present state of our commercial relations have only been contemplated, the necessity of putting more ships in commission appears most urgent. Wisdom and true policy require to be kept in active service an armed force sufficient to insure habitual respect to the American flag. Nothing less will meet the wishes, or serve the purposes of the nation. It is obvious that a force of only six hundred guns is by no means adequate to these ends: to accomplish them, the vast interests at stake must be closely guarded, and, whenever wronged, be promptly righted. Touch but in the most distant region the merest streamlet of American commerce, and you dry up here a source of comfort to thousands. Let the pirates of Sumatra break faith with the few ships that trade there, and one of the most wholesome condiments for food disappears from your table. Interrupt the whaler in his pursuit—the streets of your city are darkened; and the lamp, which lights you to bed, ceases to burn. The conduct of a foreign officer is sufficient to threaten the trade with China. The American nation, with ships rotting at their moorings, hugs up a delusive phantom of economy, and instead of reinforcing with fresh ships the China squadron, permits the only two vessels stationed in the East to return home without a relief. And thus, that has been accomplished indirectly, which, when attempted directly, was enough to drive our fathers to rebellion, and to deluge the "thirteen colonies" with blood. In consequence of the exposed state of the China trade, a tariff is laid here on tea; and every family throughout the land is taxed, because the Navy affords no ships to guaranty that trade from wilful vexation. The East India squadron (if two ships may be called a squadron) left Canton in August, at the commencement of the present difficulties there. After an interval of eight months, when England is sending out her fleets and armies, we hear that orders have been issued to fit out one small frigate and two sloops-of-war for the China seas. They will scarce be ready to sail before next August, and will hardly arrive out on their station during the current year; too late, perhaps, to retrieve what has already been lost by delay.

The government has sunk into an apathy with regard to the Navy, from which it seems nothing short of actual warfare can arouse it. We have seen the peace of the country endangered, and the government, in the most profound lethargy, passing through clouds charged with war and threatening every moment to burst upon the country—the links in the chain which binds us to other commercial nations, have been stretched to their utmost tension; unable to bear more, we have seen them ready to break and to let loose upon us all the calamities of war. But, sir, you saw no effort made to raise

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up "the right arm of this nation" in the attitude of defence; you heard no note of preparation sounded for the Navy. In its feeble state, the Navy was left exposed—ay, sir, powerless; for had war been declared, at the time it was threatened, with France, our men-of-war would have been called on to meet the enemy and give battle, when there was not one keg of proof powder in store—at least the difficulties of supplying with that article a sloop-of-war, which happened then to be fitting for sea, induce the belief that she left none behind. Lucky in our escape then, other warnings have been alike unheeded. Let it not be urged in extenuation of such neglect, that there have been cries of war! war! when there was no war: for war, like the wolf upon the shepherd's flock, will come at last; and then, like that shepherd, this nation may find itself calling to the Navy for help, when the Navy can give no help.

But, sir, I am running ahead of my subject. Let us return to the peaceful shades of commerce, and ask upon what principles of national policy are her interests left exposed, or only feebly maintained. By whose counsel, and for how long, shall a deaf ear be turned to the calls for a more effective Naval force—till the nation find itself headreached, and its commerce hemmed in and vexed on all sides? We have folded our arms, as in the delusions of a charm, and tamely looked on; while France, with her *quasi* war, has been knocking at our very doors—lording it over our sister republics, and vexing our commerce with new-fangled blockades, more odious than the paper system itself.

An armed blockade is one of the necessary evils of war among maritime nations; and although neutrals may suffer in consequence of such, nevertheless, upon well-established principles of international jurisprudence, a *belligerent* has clearly the right to cut off the resources of his enemy by an *efficient* blockade, whatever incidental injury the neutral may sustain. But, sir, I have yet to learn upon what principles, France, in a time of profound peace, claims the right to blockade Mexico and the La Plata, thereby unnecessarily harassing the citizens, and wantonly vexing the commerce of neutrals. If her own citizens have been aggrieved, or her flag insulted, she has a right to demand redress and to fix her own terms—presenting the alternative of open, manly chastisement. If the offending nation refuse to give the satisfaction claimed, then the other party may have recourse to reprisals; or, making known to the world the cause, may declare war, and proceed to enforce blockade. There is a check to prevent a commercial nation from going to war upon frivolous causes. The moment she declares war, her commerce is thrown open for plunder by privateers; and the citizens of other maritime nations flock with their private cruisers to the enemy's standard, for the purpose of taking out letters of marque. This operates as a check upon the strong in favor of the weak; and it serves too, indirectly, as a guaranty to neutrals, that their commerce with the weaker party is not to be interrupted on slight pretences. Had the French declared war against Buenos Ayres, the American vessels interrupted in that trade, might have been sold as privateers to annoy French commerce. Had France behaved with dignity, or acted honorably towards the sickly republics of Spanish America, she would in the first instance either have made her grievances cause for war, or subject for regular negotiation. But France tacitly admits that her grievances are not in themselves sufficient cause for war.* She foresaw that she could not come out of a war, even with these pigmy nations, unscathed; for she knew, that at its first notes, swarms of armed privateers would infest the ocean—pursuing her merchantmen on every sea. Therefore, holding up to the world the withered olive-branch in her hand, she has adopted a new mode of redress; and has proceeded to *obtain* satisfaction, by worrying and vexing and teasing; by torturing a miserable, helpless offender into terms,—not by any direct hostile measures, or even a system of reprisals, but by forbidding other nations to trade with the peccant republics. These republics own no ships and have no commerce, and the blockade does not in any way operate to their loss, but exclusively (almost) to that of American citizens who are engaged there in trade; and, in fact, it amounts to an interdict by France of American commerce with the blockaded powers.

In vain have American citizens complained of the effects upon them, of these blockades. Other nations, seeing that the suspended commerce was mostly American, and that therefore the United States had more at stake than they, looked to this government to step forward and resist such procedure. They recollected the bold and manly stand taken in former times on this side of the Atlantic against paper blockades and every other, except

* The grounds of difficulty are these—France demands that French citizens in Buenos Ayres should be exempt from Militia duty, and be placed on a footing with those of the most favored nation: the Buenos Ayreans say no—first enter into a treaty of peace and amity with us, and we are ready to guaranty to you and your citizens all the immunities and privileges of the most favored. The next item on the Calendar is, the claim of Monsieur Blas Despouy, a soap boiler and manufacturer of mare's grease. His factory was torn down by a mob, as a nuisance to the citizens of Buenos Ayres. The government promised indemnification; but the fulfilment of this promise was delayed in consequence of internal dissensions. The next in importance, is a demand of $20,000 for the widow of Monsieur Pierre Lavie, a traitor to the popular party, who died in prison awaiting his trial. And the next item in this extraordinary calendar of national grievances, is a demand from the French, requiring the dismissal of Col. Ramierez, who dismissed for peculation, Monsieur Cæsar Hipolyte Bacle, a Frenchman by birth, and sutler to the Buenos Ayrean Army.

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the actually efficient and effective blockade of an enemy's port by the *belligerent*. But no resistance has been offered—no remonstrance made to the course pursued by France. The government has looked on with folded arms; and, by quietly submitting, has actually consented to a new doctrine in the international code, fraught brimful of the most ruinous consequences to herself. By neglecting to instruct her men-of-war to take the "warned off" American under their guns and *force* the blockade, and by failing to make any remonstrance against the principles of such blockades, the United States has suffered France to set an example, and has herself established a precedent, the tendencies of which the wisest may not easily perceive.

True, Mr. Editor, our *present* force on the Brazil station, though it consists entirely *of the tough, live-oak built sloop Marion, of sixteen guns*, is not in a condition to inspire much terror into the French blockading squadron of thirty or forty men-of-war, or to make much headway in forcing the blockade for American merchantmen up to Buenos Ayres. I speak of the Naval force *now* there. True a brig, and the Decatur, another sloop of sixteen guns, have just sailed for that station, and, touching at Rio, may reach "the river" in sixty or ninety days. But does not this go to prove what I have elsewhere shown, that the Naval force kept in commission is too small? The last arrival* from the La Plata, brings intelligence of the murder there of an American citizen, when there was no vessel or American authority to interpose. By former arrivals, too, we hear of aggressions on American commerce, and insults to the flag. Our fellow-citizens there, urge their exposed situation, and appeal, in the most earnest tones, to their government for protection. These most urgent necessities are answered, by sending one small sloop of sixteen guns, to take the place of the Independence, a razee of fifty-four, and the Fairfield of twenty guns. I admit, sir, and strengthen my position by the admission, that a frigate is fitting out for that station—but, sir, that frigate ought to have sailed in December. It was known three years ago, that the times of the crew on board the Independence and Fairfield would expire about this time, when these ships *must* be at home. That, with all this notice, there should be no ship ready to relieve them, only shows that the public interests must suffer while the force in commission is so limited.

By acknowledging and respecting as we do, the present French blockade of Buenos Ayres, we in effect, and to all intents and purposes, grant to France and England the right to interdict at pleasure the commerce of America with any port or nation. If France, taking advantage of the weakness of the Spanish American republics, may, without appealing to arms, or resorting to reprisals, blockade their ports at will and from any cause, why, let me ask, Mr. Editor, may not England, upon the same principle, feign a point of grievance with Spain, and, laying her demands at an exorbitant rate, proceed *peaceably* to blockade Havanna, or even the whole island of Cuba? Her real object may be to weaken the hold which Spain has on that island, or it may be to suspend the supplies afforded to commerce by it, in order the more to encourage the growth of like articles among her own possessions. According to the new principles of the French blockade, Spain not being in a condition to wage a maritime war, the United States would have no right to demand that England should raise such a blockade, or declare war, and subject thereby her own citizens and commerce to the annoyances and depredations always attendant on a state of maritime warfare. With the example that has been set on this side of the Atlantic, and the precedent established by the United States, why may not Nicholas, the autocrat, make a pretext for laying Canton under perpetual blockade, that his caravans may make Odessa or St. Petersburgh the entrepot of trade with China?

But, sir, I need not refer to remote contingencies to illustrate the effects of this alarming principle. There is one, already present, apt and pointed, illustrating both the short-sighted policy of so small a Naval force, and the principles involved in the toleration of *peaceful* blockades. The emperor of China forbids to his subjects the use of opium—but English merchants claim the privilege of poisoning the Chinese, *ad libitum*, with the drug; and, because Mr. Commissioner Linn denies this right, and asserts the supremacy of Chinese law in the Celestial Empire, her Britannic Majesty's government is offended, and proceeds to send a strong force to Canton, with instructions, Mr. Editor, for all that you and I may know, or for aught this government can consistently or is prepared to do, to blockade that port; nor to raise that blockade until the tea trade, or some important commercial advantage with China, be guaranteed exclusively to English bottoms.

With these few "scraps" relating to the French blockades, I shall pass over that subject for the present. Perhaps I may take it up at another time. But I think enough has been said on that and other subjects, to show that the ships maintained in commission are not sufficient to meet the wants of commerce, or properly to maintain in a time of peace the true interests of this nation. In urging the necessity, not of increasing the Navy, Mr. Editor—for we have keels enough already laid—but of putting more ships in commission, I have not sought to derive any arguments as yet from the precept "in peace, prepare for war." Let us then examine, if the present condition of the Navy be better adapted to a state of war, than we have found it suited for "these piping times of peace." I enter

*The Independence and Fairfield have arrived since this article was prepared for the press.—*Ed.*

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upon this examination, Mr. Editor, with great reluctance, for I feel that I am not able to hold up in the true, glaring light, our feeble "right arm" and exposed condition.

Protection of commerce in times of peace, does not constitute the sole or the most important duty of a government to its citizens. To be always prepared for repelling invasion, and to be ready to give security to the life and property of the citizen, at all times, whether in peace or in war, is one of the most sacred obligations conferred by the mutual compact of citizens for government. No precept is more strictly enjoined than that of being in peace prepared for war. In conformity with it, the Navy should always be in a condition to act—not actually drawn up in line-of-battle order, but prepared for any emergency in the round of probabilities; it should maintain the defensive attitude: ever ready boldly to meet the approach of danger from without, and manfully to repel it. To assume the character of one acting on the defensive, under all circumstances, is clearly the policy of this nation. But viewing her three thousand miles of seaboard, her commercial relations and maritime character, a Navy, barely sufficient to secure respect to her flag and safety to her citizens abroad in times of profound peace, is by no means calculated properly to satisfy such a policy. It demands that ample supplies of implements and munitions of war be furnished; that all the imperishable articles of stores and outfits, necessary to a prompt equipment of a Naval force, should be collected at convenient points, and carefully lodged in store-houses, ready for use; that officers should be educated and trained in sufficient numbers to supply every ship with her due complement; and that besides the large cities, a few points of convenient situation along the coast, easy of access and of suitable harbors, should be strongly fortified and protected, to afford a shelter and a place of retreat from the enemy, where our vessels might repair damages, obtain refreshments, send in prizes, or collect for the purpose of attack.

Such, Mr. Editor, should be the situation of the Navy, and such the condition of the seaboard, before those measures of precaution be effected which it becomes a wise people to adopt. But, sir, let us return to the Navy as it is. We have seen that it is not prepared for peace; and judging from what has already been said of its *present* condition, one may safely conclude that it is as unfit for war as it is for peace. Therefore, I deem it needless to my purpose to detain you, while I accumulate evidence for the establishment of a fact which stands out in bold relief before the eyes of a whole nation, and is obvious to every one that looks to the seaboard.

In the event of war with the United States, the contest is to be on the ocean. Pursuing our defensive policy, we have nothing to fear from Cis-Atlantic nations. Among our Trans-Atlantic brethren are to be found the only true and lawful champions, who, for generations yet to come, may tilt at arms with us on any thing like equal terms. But they must traverse three thousand miles of ocean to reach the scene of tournament, and then we may fix our own terms of combat. We may have the tilt-yard either on the land or on the sea. True to the principles of a defensive policy, this remoteness from an enemy is a tower of strength. But, sir, our coast is defenceless—our nakedness is exposed to the world—our harbors might be blockaded, and our ships as effectually shut up in them now, as they were twenty-odd years ago.

In 1819, Commodore Warrington, with five other Captains in the Navy, submitted to the Navy Department a plan for defending the seaboard, and of protecting our harbors from blockade, and for strengthening the Navy; and they memorialized Congress on the subject. At that early day in the improvements in the application of steam, they proposed that a few small steamers should be built, and, mounting two or three guns each, be stationed in our principal bays and harbors. Two or three such at New York, with a battery on shore, under the guns of which they might fly for protection when too closely pressed, would not only be sufficient to secure that port against blockade from the strongest force, but would prove a valuable corps of reserve, which might be suddenly concentrated at any point along the coast on important occasions, either for giving battle or making defence. For, to borrow an idea from those memorialists, the *fear* of such steamers would keep off any blockading squadron. No prudent officer, however brave, would continue within the reach of such vessels always seeking to annoy and harass. They could regulate the time and manner of attack, towing down the fire-ship at night, or the man-of-war, to engage the straggler in the calm. Coming when least expected, they could choose their own distance, fire, and retreat under cover of the dark, only to renew the attack from some other quarter. Not to mention the shot that would tell, or their effect on ship and life, a few sleepless nights passed at quarters, watching for an invisible enemy, would wear down and exhaust the stoutest crew, and in themselves be sufficient to drive away any blockading force. No troops could ever effect a landing in the vicinity of such vessels. With coal for fuel, in a dark night, one such steamer would have upon a blockading force, the effect which the rifle of the Santa Fe trader, hid in a jungle, has upon the hostile party of Indians.

This admirable plan for defending the coast was conceived, Mr. Editor, when the inconveniencies which we had suffered, and the advantages which the enemy derived from our unprotected coast and harbors, during the war, were fresh in the recollection of the public. It was urged by those officers more than twenty years ago. But notwithstand-

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ing the scheme was so practicable, so obviously advantageous, and so entirely in conformity with the policy adopted in 1816 with regard to building ships for the Navy, and withal so *cheap* too, yet the only vessel of the kind which, up to this day, the Navy can boast of, is one small abortion—fit only to sail on the smooth surface of a summer sea. These officers performed their duty by calling the attention of their government to the subject. They represented the exposed situation of the coast, proposed the remedy, and modestly left their plan of defence to rest upon its own merits. Simple in its means, and unpretending in design, the beautiful system was smothered by the most wild and extravagant schemes for protecting the coast—schemes utopian in the extreme, and fit only to be discussed by the inmates of a mad-house. Some of them contemplated a line of fortifications from North to South, on a scale scarcely less grand and magnificent than that of a Chinese wall. Cabinet members were called on to state *how much* money *could* be expended—while in the councils of the nation the most extravagant plans for spending money were brought forward. A system of defence was there gravely discussed, which provided for protecting the seaboard with a line of the most expensive fortifications—actually of studding three thousand miles of seacoast with forts and castles so numerous, that we might have fired to a gazing world a grand national salute from the broadside of the Atlantic, as from the deck of a man-of-war. Beginning on the banks of the St. John's in Maine, the sound of the first gun would have been caught up at the nearest fort; and, booming down from castle to castle, and from state to state, the report of the last gun in the long line of fire, crossing the Sabine, might have alarmed our neighbors in Texas.

And pray, sir, what think you is the condition of our seaboard, and our state of defence, after this lapse of years and the expenditure of millions out of the public treasury? With the exception of a few more ships on the stocks, and a few more rotting in the water, nearly that in which the war found us. An enemy's squadron may now ride as safely at anchor in Lynhaven bay—land troops, or, with a superior force, lock up our men-of-war as effectually in the harbor of Norfolk, as it might have done in the last war. A few points have been strengthened I admit. But defence is wanted for a line, not for points. And I know not how this may be accomplished, except by steamers in the manner proposed. Do not understand me as decrying the plan which has been pursued, with regard to collecting *materiel* and building *ships* for the Navy. As far as it goes, that plan is admirable, and has been judiciously carried out so far as *ships* alone are concerned. It is defective in this: that it has failed to provide the Navy with officers for but a little more than a fourth of those ships, or to furnish it with the necessary number of steamers and small vessels. We have quite as many large ships in the Navy as a proper regard for public economy and the true interests of the country require there should be in times of peace. The policy of collecting together the frames for ships, and of stowing them safely away under cover, cannot be too highly commended. But by doing this—acting in part and not extending the plan of defensive preparation to the whole system—is like preparing to board a vessel from the upper deck, while the port-holes to the decks below are left unguarded. Through them the enemy may enter, seize on your magazine, and cut off your supplies from below.

Slow to adopt improvements, or to institute experiments in the Navy, other nations have brought over in our waters their men-of-war-steamers, and have demonstrated for us, the practicability of a plan of defence which American officers had originated and tried in vain to prevail on their government to adopt. At this moment, the Navy affords the instance of an officer proposing a new and improved principle in the construction of steam-vessels-of-war. He is urging the government to make the experiment by building one such, and pledges a princely fortune in payment of the costs, provided it prove a failure. Such vessels-of-war in the hands of others, throw in a more glaring light our nakedness and our defenceless condition. In future, the West Indies are to be the scene of our great Naval engagements—the vast slaughter-house of maritime nations at war. France and England have there their islands at which their ships may rendezvous. But such is the unprotected state of our Southern coast, and the condition of our Navy at present, that, in a war with either of these two powers, Pensacola and all the rich outpourings of the Mississippi would be at their mercy. Unable to muster as strong a force as either of those nations, we might not risk a general engagement with the odds against us. There is no harbor strengthened on the Atlantic border in the South, at which our forces might retire from a superior force; or rendezvous—to watch the movements of the enemy—to afford protection to our commerce entering the Gulf, and to await the favorable moment of attack. Nor would Pensacola afford a safe retreat to our vessels. In such a war, Norfolk would be the nearest point at which our Navy might find a secure place of retreat, or of rendezvous. Under such circumstances, an enemy's ships, sallying out from his strong holds in the West Indies, like Van Tromp of yore in the English channel, might sweep, with brooms at their mast heads, every stitch of American canvass from the Gulf of Mexico. In our present state of defence, all the immense wealth which is poured in and out of that Gulf, as through a funnel, would be at the mercy of the enemy.

Pensacola and some point in Georgia, or on the

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Eastern coast of Florida, cannot be too strongly fortified, or too well supplied now, with all the imperishable articles on the list of outfits for shipping—with implements and instruments of war. They would be to the Gulf of Mexico and the West Indies, what Gibraltar is to the Mediterranean and Levant. There our vessels might rendezvous, and thence hold the enemy in check. For them, our merchant vessels when pursued would shape their course, and find safety in the strength of these two points. There, too, our traders, whether bound to or from the Gulf of Mexico, might resort and obtain safe convoy beyond the enemy's reach. A few steamers stationed at each place would effectually secure it against blockade.

The importance, Mr. Editor, of establishing two such points at the South, the defenceless and exposed condition in which the immense wealth constantly pouring in and out of the Mississippi would be found by a war, seems not to be properly understood or felt at the South and West. Every Southron—ay, more—but cross the dividing line, the ridge which separates the Mississippi from the Atlantic waters—and every citizen to the North, to the South and the West, has a direct personal interest in the matter. They have the right, and, as good citizens, it becomes them to insist on the establishment of strong Naval stations, sufficient for the security and protection of their millions of yearly produce on its way out upon the high seas. Let them take a map and examine with a view to ascertain what protection is guaranteed to their commerce in time of war. They will find that the Gulf of Mexico, studded with islands on its Eastern borders, is hemmed in on all sides by other nations; that every "pass" is commanded by them. And in time of war the only outlet for their commerce, is round Cape Sable through the Gulf of Florida; that, along this "pass," it must have a strong guard, lest it fall a prey into the enemy's hands. And they will then see, that cost what money it may, the United States should have the command—should hold the keys to this "pass." They will see, too, that no such keys are in the hands of their government, and that they can only be obtained by the establishment of two strongly fortified Naval stations—one on each side of Cape Sable. As one whose pride it is to "hail" from the West, I warn my fellow-citizens there, of the dangers which some day may blight their prosperity; and as one who may be called on to ward off those dangers in the face of death, I beseech them to look to their welfare—and now, while it is peace, to listen to the dictates of prudence and of wisdom, and warn their representatives in Congress not to let their especial interests, and the nation's wealth, be found in this exposed, unprotected, and defenceless state, in the hour of danger.

A few men-of-war steamers built now, and maintained along the coast as a coast-squadron—to serve as a school for officers—to protect the revenue—to carry assistance to vessels in distress—and to act on the various emergencies that arise from time to time in our own waters or their vicinity, would be found useful and serviceable to a degree, in time of peace. In war, they would be of the utmost importance. Ready to defend our seaport towns from sudden attack, and our harbors from blockade—prompt to bring reinforcements, or to concentrate strength—they would serve as a sort of flying artillery at sea. The usefulness of armed steamers for coöperating with our Navy, in bringing fresh ships into action, and towing out of line the disabled and crippled, cannot be too strongly dwelt upon. The importance of steam, Mr. Editor, in Naval warfare, is so obvious—our necessity for it so urgent, so palpable—that writing of it is like treating of a truism. A law, authorizing the building of a suitable number of steamers now, for the protection of our principal harbors, and the collection of boilers, engines and other materials for more in the event of war, would be well-timed and exceedingly judicious.

We have seen that the Navy, in its present state, is too feeble to protect our commerce in times of peace, much less to defend our seaport towns and coast and our flag in time of war. The seaboard is open to attack without the means of defence, and our borders on the lakes are as defenceless as those on the sea. Shall nothing short of actual war rouse this nation from its lethargy! We sit quietly and behold England at work on the Lakes. She is erecting fortifications, and, *in violation of a solemn treaty*, is strengthening herself there. When tamely asked, why these warlike preparations, and reminded by a high functionary of this government, "that the extensive accommodations prepared and preparing at old and at new stations, the works finished and in the course of construction, *on the land and on the water*, are not in harmony with the assurance, that the only object is the preservation of a few unimportant buildings and store-houses," &c., the British Minister replies: "The fact is, that her Majesty's authorities have not as yet altered their state of *preparation*, or strengthened their military means, with a view to settling the question of the boundary." Would not such language induce you, sir, to ask the question, *for what purpose then are these preparations?* Or is the meaning too obvious to require explanation? To say the least of it, it is an insinuation that, in the eyes of others, we should be very vulnerable from the lakes. It might with great propriety be taken as a hint for putting the lake frontier in order—for sending there a few pieces of ordnance, with other little items on the list of outfits; and since, by treaty, we may not have on the water but one or two guns, it would be prudent to have a good staunch war-steamer or so on the stocks, ready for going into the water at a moment's warning; and to have too, materials prepared

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for building and equipping a respectable fresh-water Navy.

I neither advocate a war, Mr. Editor, nor am I one of those who believe a war with England inevitable to the settlement of the question of boundary for Maine. It is not the interest, nor do I believe it is the intention, on either side, to make war. But the peace of the two countries hangs by mere threads, which, by accident, or the malicious intentions of a few, may be overstrained. The acts of one or two hot-heads along the disputed territory, may arouse the angry blood of the opposite party and cause war. Nor is the question of the Maine boundary the only warlike cloud on the horizon, or the only quarter in which a storm may be brewing. The long line of boundary from the waters of the Mississippi to those of the Pacific is unsettled, and is rapidly rising into importance. England is said to have her eye on the two Californias; but the declaration, long since made known to the world, that the United States would not prevent on this continent the future colonization of any European power, remains to be tested. The difficulties in the China trade are well calculated to prove a fruitful source of international disputes between England and America. The present attitude of affairs there renders necessary every measure of precaution, that is consistent with national prudence. Under these clouds lowering upon the horizon, our neighbor on the North, with that head-reaching policy and political forecast for which she is so celebrated, is strengthening her weak points and preparing for the worst. With springs on her cables and matches lighted, she is training her guns upon us, while our decks are lumbered up with politics, and we have neither guns mounted nor magazines in order. And here sir, permit me to drop for a moment the thread of my argument, that I may disabuse the public mind, touching the views and feelings of the Navy with regard to war, and repel an imputation recently cast upon the officers of the Army and Navy. The assertion thrown out in one of our public prints, that the officers of these two services desire war from selfish considerations, is a libel upon their chivalry. The conduct and past history of those services afford no grounds whatever for such an assertion. Ready to risk their lives in defence of their country, and to sustain its honor at all hazards, their whole bearing, in peace and in war, shows that its chief good is at all times their desire;—deeming it an honor and a privilege to do battle for their country, it is their glory to make, not to break its peace. If there be a spirit in either service, not actuated by this principle, its members acknowledge no fellowship whatever with any such, but consider it as an excrescence, and no part of the body proper. Either service may have its parasites, Mr. Editor, but in speaking the sentiments of my brethren in arms, I do not include as of them, any, who, in their unrighteous aspirations for a little brief authority, can stoop to intrigue and adulation. The peans that we have heard sung to the panders of party, and the hosannas that we have heard shouted before images of wood, tell that there may be festering upon the Army and Navy, loathsome and corrupting masses of ambitious putrefaction. Such, sir, may lust after the flesh-pots of war as their chief good, and desire prize money and promotion at the sacrifice of country; but they are disgusting in the sight of all honorable men, and offensive to the public, and should not be considered as a part proper of either service.

But to take up the broken thread. I am by no means, Mr. Editor, in favor of an overgrown and useless Navy; nor do I advocate preparations on a wild and extravagant scale. I simply advocate the policy of maintaining, in time of peace, a Navy with just ships enough in commission properly to support the interests of the nation—holding enough in reserve to meet the probable exigences of war. I only propose that that shall be done for the Navy, which has been done and is doing for the Militia. Have you not your arsenals and magazines filled with the implements and munitions of war? Is it not a settled policy, steadily pursued, that of putting the interior of the country in a state of defence? And, sir, because you have strong arms and brave hearts within, will you throw open the gates of the citadel, break down the outer works, and leave your coast unprotected and defenceless, that the enemy may enter your strong holds, and attack you at once in your high places? I trow not.

But, sir, in advocating the collecting of materials, the building of steamers, and the putting of more ships in commission, I beg to remind you, that these are not the only requisites of the service, or all that the country requires. It takes something more than spars and guns, and walls of wood, to constitute a Navy. These are only the body—the arms and legs, without the thews and sinews. It requires the muscle of the brawny seaman, and the spirit of the well-trained officer, to impart life and motion to such a body, to give vigor and energy to the whole system. Our admirable commercial marine keeps in constant training one hundred thousand of the former, ready, at the report of the first gun, to enlist in the Navy: and it becomes the government to supply the latter. Ships may be built in a month and by the dozens. Sailors may be trained by the thousands in the merchant service, without the appropriation of a dollar out of the public treasury; but a ship without officers, is like a cloud without water. And the officer cannot be disciplined in a day, nor schooled in a year. The Midshipman who enters your service to-day, has a long, tedious term of probation before him; too tedious for his good, and too long for the good of the service. The law requires that he shall

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serve not less than five years for his commission as *Lieutenant*, but usage has drawn the term out to twelve years. The Navy Register shows on its list of Passed Midshipmen, fifty of that class of officers who have been in service from twelve to sixteen years, and have not yet attained to the rank of Lieutenants. In case then of a war, when every ship would be put in commission, and the keels of more laid down at once, whence would officers be obtained for them?

According to the Navy Register, there are in the Navy sixty-seven vessels of all classes, rated at one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six guns, but pierced for, and calculated to mount something over twenty-five hundred. According to *rate*, the vessels that are in commission—that is, those that have men and officers on board, and wear colors—mount eight hundred and eighteen guns, including two hundred and two on board the receiving ships at the different yards, but which are not fitted for sea. This leaves for active sea service, including those that are bound for, and returning from, their station, an effective force of six hundred and sixteen guns. The same Register shows, that the number of commissioned officers in the Navy, including Captains, Commanders, Lieutenants, Surgeons with their assistants, and Pursers, amount to five hundred and eighty-one. Of these, three hundred and eighty-one are on duty, one hundred and sixty-one applicants for duty, and forty sick are on leave of absence. Now, if from these five hundred and eighty-one, ten per cent. be deducted for sickness, for contingent duty and special service, and the remaining number, five hundred and twenty-three, be divided into four classes, (and you will find that the wants of the service have very nearly thus divided them,) you will have three of these classes, or three hundred and ninety-two officers, always on duty; and the fourth class, or one hundred and thirty-one officers, waiting orders. This fourth class constitutes a corps of reserve at home, for any sudden emergency calling for the employment of more vessels and officers, and serves as a relief to the other classes—one of which returns home every year, and of course each performs, in routine, its three years round of service. But, observe, that this number of officers, in times of peace, is barely sufficient to meet the exigencies of the Navy, having an effective, *sea-going* force of only six hundred guns. What then, Mr. Editor, would be the condition of the Navy, as it concerns officers, were all the ships, mounting more than four times six hundred guns, to be suddenly fitted out? The Navy is worse off for *personel*—far more so—than it is for *materiel*. The law of 1816, provides every thing necessary to an increase of the Navy, but that part which, equally as important as ships, is the most difficult to obtain, viz. an efficient corps of officers.

True policy—the spirit of our institutions—require that the Navy, as well as the Army, should be regulated according to the strictest principles of economy; that in times of peace, the two services should be depleted—reduced down to the lowest state—maintained as mere skeletons—barely able to answer the purposes of their creation. But, sir, it is an important part of this same policy, that these skeletons should be endowed with recuperative energies, quick and strong, ready at all times to impart health and vigor, and robust action to the whole frame. This policy has been pursued with regard to the Army, and experience commends it highly. Keeping up the full complement of officers to every regiment, soldiers are maintained, barely enough in each, to preserve its form, and, when filled up with recruits for war, to give it character. But such a policy has been pursued only in part with regard to the Navy. It has been observed in providing the wood and iron, and cordage and canvass, but not in educating officers for our ships. In case of war, every regiment has its officers complete—not so with a ship. In peace, our skeleton regiments are on duty; but our skeleton ships are laid up "in ordinary;" nevertheless, they are in the Navy, and may be wanted for duty, and the Navy should furnish some source from which officers may be obtained for them. And so long as the Navy has ships, for which it affords no officers, so long is its organization incomplete and defective.

The number of officers in the Navy should be regulated by the number of ships in the Navy. But there is actually only a little more than one-fourth of the number of officers required by this rule. And is it not a remarkable piece of incongruity in the system, for the gradual increase of the Navy, to spend thousands in building ships, failing to provide officers for them? When the keel of a ship is laid, it is known where the guns which she is to mount are to come from; and it is but a part of the same system, to cast about beforehand for officers for her, when she goes into the water. I do not intend to convey the idea, that each ship, like a regiment, should have its particular set of officers, but that the Navy should afford officers enough to let each ship have her full complement of officers when put in commission. The Navy, in its present state, has a force in active service of six hundred guns—has a *line* (by which I include only Lieutenants, Commanders and Captains,) of four hundred officers, and employs six thousand seamen. But, if every ship belonging to it were fully equipped and manned for service, the Navy would consist of about four times this force; that is, of twenty-five hundred guns and twenty-five thousand seamen. Now, to drill these men at their guns; to put them in an efficient state of discipline, and to train them for battle and manœuvre; to infuse in them a proper spirit; to encourage them in the hour of battle, by precept and example; to rally the faltering, and to inspire confidence in

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every breast; we have less than four hundred officers, or less than one for sixty. And this is supposing that *every* officer would be afloat, which could not be the case; for our Navy Yards, our shipping rendezvous, and other stations on shore, must all have their quota from this four hundred. True, there are one hundred and ninety-one Passed Midshipmen, who might immediately be promoted to the rank of Lieutenants. But, even with this accession, the proportion of officers to men and guns, would be far below the ratio that insures discipline and efficiency to a man-of-war.

The number of guns, officers and men now actually in service, will serve as the argument for determining the number of officers which would be required for four times the present number of guns and men. Therefore, if we take from the Register the number of officers of each grade that are actually on duty, and multiply it by four, we shall have the number required for all the ships. Thus we find, with one-fourth of our whole Naval force in service, we have twenty-eight Captains and twenty-three Commanders *on duty*. With the whole in service, there would, at this rate, be a call for one hundred and twelve Captains and Admirals, ninety-two Commanders; and so on with the Lieutenants. Thus, there is obtained the minimum number in each grade of officers that the interests of the country will justify. In this estimate, Mr. Editor, you will observe that I make no allowance for any of the "ills which flesh is heir to," but am acting on the supposition that, in the event of war, every officer would tell; which would not be the case,—for some would be disabled from duty by sickness, and the various casualties incident to a sea life. I do not propose to swell the number of Pursers in this ratio, because the duties of this class of officers require of them no previous training in the Navy.

But, sir, it is no part of my present purpose to enter into detail, lest you and your readers lose sight of the main question. And lest some of the latter should say that my proposition to quadruple—no, to about double the number of commissioned officers in the Navy—is at variance with my doctrines of political economy, I beg to remind them, that either the number of officers in the Navy must be regulated by the number of ships, or that the number of ships in the Navy must be regulated by the number of officers: and that, in this matter, I am in a dilemma. I must propose, either, that officers be increased to supply our ships, or that one-half of our beautiful ships—our tremendous Pennsylvania, and other noble specimens of American skill—be sunk, or burnt, or sold; and the Navy reduced until the ships be proportioned to the number of officers. In this case, I think, sir, that it is cheaper to build than to destroy; and more consistent with the principles of political economy to promote a half dozen officers, than to build and sink a ship of the line. Nor do I think the Navy is one ounce of metal too strong; but on the contrary, I have shown that it is not in a condition of active defence, nor of proper efficiency, nor strong enough. As it regards the proposed increase of officers, the true question is, I think, Mr. Editor, not how many additional dollars and cents will it require to pay these officers; but would the interests of the country be advanced by such increase? Do the dignity and honor of this nation require that her ships should be well commanded and bravely fought?—if yea, money is no part of the argument.

Some, Mr. Editor, may ask, where, or how shall employment be found for those officers in times of peace? I answer—in our ships in times of peace; employed as the officers in our skeleton regiments are in times of peace—serving their country and preparing to fulfil the object of the government in creating them, by keeping themselves in training; by keeping pace with the improvements in their profession; by being constantly in a state of preparation, holding themselves ready and equal at all times to those great and sudden emergencies when they are to prove their value to their country. That all this may be effected, it is only necessary to swell the complement of officers for each ship in commission, and make it a little larger than it would be in time of war. From such an arrangement, much practical good would immediately result to the service; for it would put an end to that system of acting appointments so much in vogue now, and which is so destructive to the good order and discipline of the Navy. We should not then, as now, see that non-descript class of officers styled Passed Midshipmen, and to which, according to the "Rules and Regulations of the Navy," no *particular duty can be assigned*, hacked about, imposed upon, and required to perform duty in every grade in the Navy. On my last cruise, a Passed Midshipman was the first Lieutenant—the Acting Surgeon was a Passed Midshipman—and a Passed Midshipman was the Purser and the Acting Gunner. In other vessels, we see them Acting Captains, Masters, Chaplains and Midshipmen. To-day, "the monarch of the peopled deck," and the dignified occupant of the Captain's cabin—to-morrow, the puling Middy again, without authority, the mere walking echo to a trumpet of tin on the quarter-deck; and this, too, from no fault of his, but owing to the presence of an officer in whose grade he has been acting. This official see-sawing is full of evil tendencies, and is subversive of the first principles of good order and discipline.

But, sir, I leave this matter to the Honorable Secretary of the Navy. He has been called on to submit a plan for the re-organization of the Navy, and I have no disposition to meddle in the matter. To a man of energy and capacity, I know not

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where a more enviable reputation may be gained, than that which will be the reward of him, who shall reform and place the Navy on a footing to correspond with the wants of the nation and the dignity of the Republic.

I think, Mr. Editor, that I have said enough to convince you of the necessity of more and higher grades—to convince you that the present Naval force in commission neither comports with the interests nor the dignity of the nation—that there are ships enough laid up and rotting to supply this force—that the seaboard is not in a proper state of defence, nor the Navy in a condition to defend it—and that in war, our ships, for the want of officers, could not be properly disciplined, well managed, or bravely fought. So far, I have purposely omitted all detail. But it shall not be so with the few "scraps" that remain. They relate to one or two subjects that, of themselves, make up in part the detail of the present system. They are of great importance, and require close investigation. The chief of these subjects relates to Education in the Navy.

Now and then a feeble effort has been made, with the view of introducing some system of education in the Navy; but every such effort has proved abortive. The plan of furnishing schoolmasters to ships setting out on a three years cruise, was tried; but no useful result accruing in many years, that plan proved altogether impracticable, and has been condemned by all in the service. Without considering that the defect was in the system, and not in *name*, an attempt was made to improve the education of young officers by changing the title of the teacher. The title of Schoolmaster was exchanged for Professor of Mathematics, but his duties and authority remained the same. To this day there is no work that has been assigned as a text-book for the Navy. The teacher has no authority whatever over the pupil, nor can he claim the attendance or attention of the latter in the school-room, or to any particular study. The whole plan is without order.

The first ship, Mr. Editor, that I sailed in, had a schoolmaster; a young man from Connecticut. He was qualified, and well disposed to teach navigation, but not having a school-room, or authority to assemble the Midshipmen, the cruise passed off without the opportunity of organizing his school. From him, therefore, we learned nothing. On my next cruise, the dominie was a Spaniard; and, being bound to South America, there was a perfect mania in the steerage for the Spanish language. In our youthful impetuosity we bought books, and for a week or so, pursued the study with great eagerness. But our spirits began to flag, and the difficulties of *ser* and *estar*, finally laid the copestone for us over the dominie's vernacular. The study was exceedingly dry. We therefore voted both teacher and grammar a bore, and committing the latter to the deep, with one accord, declared in favor of the Byronical method—

> "'Tis pleasant to be taught in a strange tongue
> By female lips and eyes;"

and concluded to defer our studies till we should arrive in the South American vale of paradise, called Valparaiso. After arriving on that station, the Commander, who had often expressed his wish that we should learn to speak Spanish, sent down "for all the young gentlemen," as the Middys are called, and commenced to ask us one by one—"Can you speak Spanish?" "No, sir." "Then you are no gentleman." "Can you?" But always receiving the same answer, he sent us out of the cabin as a set of blackguards. As he was as ignorant on this subject as any of us, we included him among the number, and thought it an excellent joke. Thus ended our scholastic duties in that ship. I was afterwards transferred to another vessel in which the schoolmaster was a young lawyer, who knew more about *jetsum* and *flotsum*, than about lunars and dead reckoning—at least, I presume so, for he never afforded us an opportunity to judge of his knowledge on the latter subjects. He was not on speaking terms with the reefers—ate up all the plums for the duff, and was finally turned out of the ship as a nuisance.

When I went to sea again, the teacher was an amiable and accomplished young man, from "the land of schoolmasters and leather pumpkin seed." Poor fellow!—far gone in consumption, had a field of usefulness been open to him, he could not have labored in it. He went to sea for his health, but never returned. There was no schoolmaster in the next ship, and the "young gentlemen" were as expert at lunars, and as *au fait* in the mysteries of latitude and departure, as any I had seen. In my next ship, the dominie was a young man, troubled, like some of your correspondents, Mr. Editor, with *cacoethes scribendi*. He wrote a book. But I never saw him teaching "the young idea," or instructing the young gentlemen in the art of plain sailing; nor did I think it his fault, for he had neither school-room nor pupil. Such is my experience of the school system in the Navy; and I believe that of every officer will tally with it.

In some ships, the Captain will occasionally lend his forward cabin as a school-room. But a school-room, when all parts of the system are defective, can be of little use. Here, the teacher has none of that power or authority which we find accorded to him elsewhere, and which is indispensable to the faithful performance of his duties. At our universities, in our colleges, academies, and in every school, how humble soever, experience has taught us the necessity of clothing the preceptor with authority to enforce obedience and command attention to his precepts. Not so in the man-of-war. There, the professor is a lubber—a non-mili-

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tant—an "idler," to whom the young *officer* recognizes no principle of obedience, and to whom the law has granted no sign whatever of authority. But were the teacher, under the present system, a sea officer, a Lieutenant or Commander, his opportunities for usefulness would be very little greater than those of the dominie himself. At sea, a Midshipman is actually on duty—that is, on deck keeping watch—eight hours every day. Besides this, he is liable to casual interruptions for duty, such as exercising great guns and small arms—going to quarters—attending to the duties of his division—reefing topsails, &c.; amounting, in the aggregate, to a daily average for duty of two hours more; or amounting in all to constant employment at sea of ten hours a day. In port, he is on duty two days, and off one; and this day is "his liberty day," when he usually claims the privilege of going on shore for exercise, amusement, relaxation and the like. Add to this, the interruptions to which the school-room is liable, even on this third day, by general quarters, the exercises of getting under way, reefing and handing, &c.—take also into the account, the official ceremonies and visits of etiquette to the Captain—all requiring the school-room to be vacated—and you may form some idea of the difficulties and drawbacks which even one, who is *resolved* to study, has to contend with on board of ship. But to the great mass, who are ready to excuse themselves from study upon any pretext, how insuperable are these obstacles.

Among all the officers of the Navy in the *line*, from the youngest Midshipman to the senior Post-Captain, I know of but one, Mr. Editor, who has taken a degree in any college or institution of learning in the United States. As odious as comparisons are said to be, I cannot here refrain from calling your attention to the fact, that while some of the best treatises on the subjects to which they relate, have for their authors officers of the Army, the Navy is remarkably barren in professional works. From the first establishment of the Navy, up to the present time, no scientific or professional work of any kind (if we make one exception only) has been produced by any officer in it. We, in the Navy, have our books of travels, our cruises and our voyages—very respectable it is true; but I speak of the great dearth of works by *sea* officers on professional subjects. The reason is obvious. The officers of the Army have the benefit of a professional education. Their Military Academy at West Point, by the course of instruction pursued there, affords the most useful and practical education to be obtained in the country. Like advantages have not only been denied to the Navy, but Cadets, who have been dismissed for incapacity at West Point, are sometimes palmed off upon the Navy as Midshipmen.

Several years ago, in examining the many beautiful models in the Patent-Office at Washington, I recollect to have been struck with the number that had been deposited there by officers of the Army. I asked the gentleman who was with me, if Navy officers had deposited no models there of invention by them? "O, yes," said he, and called my attention from a beautiful improvement in a piece of ordnance, and an ingenious contrivance for counteracting the effects of local variation on the mariner's compass, bearing on their labels U. S. A., to examine the model of a washing-machine, invented by a doughty old Commodore. It is among the rights of copy and patent that we must look for the tangible fruits of a scientific education. The piece of ordnance and the washing-machine, exhibited in the Patent-Office, afford a striking and apt illustration of the attention which has been bestowed on the education of officers for one service, and the neglect to afford any such advantages to officers of the other service.

But be not startled, Mr. Editor; I am no advocate for levelling *downwards*, by destroying our only National Seminary; neither do I propose a Naval Academy, or advocate any splendid scheme for founding an institution of learning for the Navy. The Navy will be content with something very simple in design—humble and unpretending in character—merely a school-ship, in which its future Perrys and Hulls and Decaturs shall be educated. I think I can show that such a ship properly managed, will be sufficient for the education of all the officers for the Navy; and that, independent of all the advantages of education, it will be an annual saving to the government of more than $150,000—which is now expended every year in training up officers for the service.

But before we enter into the details of this plan, Mr. Editor, let us understand what is required in a well-regulated system of Naval Education. Let us decide whether the true interests of the service require that its officers should be adepts and proficients in every particular branch of science that has a bearing on their profession, or whether each officer should be a sort of walking encyclopedia, understanding something of all,—not your smatterer, sir—he is an abomination:—but your man of real solid parts; well grounded in mathematics, and sufficiently indoctrinated in the elements and principles of the other leading branches of science, to pursue in after life his favorite department of science, with advantage to himself and the service; and that his attainments be such as to enable him to put into practice, whenever the exigencies of the service shall require it of him, the principles of any other branch of science which may have formed a part of his studies on board the school-ship. The latter, I think, is clearly the style of education best suited to your Navy officer.

Thus, let him whose tastes delight most in some of the departments of natural science, come out of the school-ship sufficiently indoctrinated in

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geodesy, astronomy, and the principles of navigation, to enable him to conduct surveys, to read the stars, and translate at pleasure longitude from the moon, or time from the sun. Nor should he who delights to grapple with the subtilites of steam, or to describe the laws of motion by the composition and resolution of forces, be wholly unacquainted with the doctrines of the parabola, or be ignorant of the principles of trajectiles. The sport of the winds, and the plaything of the ocean, there is no science, nor learning, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, that is profitless to the Navy officer. The laws which regulate the flowing of a tide, or the trembling of the needle—the causes which govern the set of a current—the direction of the wind—or the course of a meteor—are to him subjects of deep concern. To him the floating particles in the water, and trifles to others light as air, are sometimes the elements of important calculation. According to the recollection of the "oldest inhabitants," confirmed by the rich meadows of made land, the harbor of Liverpool was filling up; but whether from the land or the sea it was not known. By an ingenious system of experiments, an officer of the Royal Navy ascertained that the quantity of *silt*, brought in and left by each tide, was greater than that which was carried out. He persuaded the authorities to construct a *jettee*—after which, he found that the quantity of silt carried out by the ebb greatly exceeded that brought in by the flood—a sure proof that the process of gradual filling up, which had been going on for years, was suddenly converted into one of deepening that important harbor.

As the representative abroad of his country, the Navy officer is not unfrequently called on to act under the most perplexing questions of the international code; or to expound, for the guidance of fellow-mariners, the quirks and quibbles of maritime jurisprudence. Pneumatics, hydraulics and dynamics constitute both the lever and the power which enable him to turn his ship on the ocean. They are the railway, the steam and the traction; and he, trimming his sails, throws his ship into gear, and balancing her, his locomotive, with contending elements, traverses sea and ocean, nor dreads their fury. Is it idle, Mr. Editor, for the conductor on your railway to be indoctrinated into the mysteries of steam, or to be taught the nature of traction, and the effects of resistance? If it be profitable for him to analyze the elements whence the power which draws his train is derived, equally important is it that the conductor of your marine locomotive should understand whence and how the forces are derived which send his ship through the water. By sound, your Navy officer measures the range of his shot, or tells his distance from the land; and the velocity of light is an argument by which he is made to know the true places of the stars—therefore, let him have *light* too.

For reasons such as these, Mr. Editor, I would lay the foundations of a school for the Navy officer on the most substantial basis, broad, solid and comprehensive—not too deep, lest the means defeat the end; proficiency in any branch of learning or study, is more than the work of a life-time—but let the course of his instruction include enough only of first principles to enlighten the mind, and to enable the student to look over into the field of science, with just understanding enough to select for cultivation any particular flower which most should please the judgment—taking care, as I said before, to qualify each one well for the ordinary routine of duty peculiar to the Navy. I would not have the Midshipman to delve over the theories of gravitation, until he could describe me the orbit of a planet as though it had never been determined; nor would I forbid him to rate his chronometer by a well-regulated clock, because he had not measured the semi-diameter of the earth, calculated the length of pendulum to vibrate seconds in his latitude, and compared this length with that of the actual pendulum. But I would teach him enough of mathematics, and of the laws of gravitation, to enable him, if his mind delighted in abstruse calculations, to study at his leisure his favorite authors.

The art of drawing is highly useful to the Navy officer;—views of headlands—delineations of forts and castles, with sketches of their topography—drawings of every improvement seen abroad, whether in the outfits and fixtures on board ship, or in implements of husbandry and manufactures, would not only be interesting in themselves, but exceedingly valuable to the country at large; yet drawing is no part of the present course of education in the Navy. The officer who is sent to survey a coast or harbor in a foreign country, or even in his own, and who brings home correct information of the soil, flora, and minerals of that region, certainly performs his duty in a more satisfactory manner than he whose ignorance of botany, mineralogy and geology, enables him to collect no such information. These branches, therefore, ought not to be considered foreign to his profession; for they serve greatly to enrich his labors. Enlarge his field of usefulness, by including other departments of natural history in the course of instruction, and you enable him to fill up with useful occupation, the odd ends of time which hang so heavily upon the hands of the officer on a three years cruise. Valuable contributions from pen and pencil to our institutions of learning and science—to our societies for the diffusion of knowledge and useful information—would be some of the most obvious results of such an arrangement. But the introduction of rare plants and flowers—specimens and drawings of subjects in natural history—descriptions of new genera and species, and of unknown varieties—would constitute but a small portion of the useful results incidental to a liberal system of education for the Navy. With the minds

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of officers properly directed, the American Navy may gather laurels in peace, as green and as unfading as those which it has won in war.

A ship is to be cut out, or a fort stormed, under cover of the dark; but, before either can be done, a plan of the harbor is wanted—but the enemy will not knowingly permit a survey. In this case, the officer of resources—and a sailor should never be without resources, as long as there is a plank between him and the ocean—may accomplish that by night which he may not do by day; and after a few hours' (or nights at most) work in the dark, he will have his chart constructed and spread out before him, with his plan of attack all arranged. Your Army officer, Mr. Editor, plans his fort, designs mote and circumvallation, parapet and glacis, and superintends the construction of the most stupendous works. And why may not Midshipmen learn in their school-ship the principles of Naval architecture? Why should not the Navy officer be taught to plan the model of your ship; and, submitting his plan and drawings, have the privilege also of superintending the construction of his castle—the fort in which he is to sink or swim?

Naval gunnery and pyrotechny, hollow shot, tactics and discipline, should all have their allotted time in the course of instruction, and receive each its due quota of attention in the school-ship. Languages too, though last, yet not least, Mr. Editor, should be included in the system. Though in my own case, you recollect, I gave the preference to the voluntary plan of learning "strange tongues;" yet that was in the days of giddy youth, and subsequent experience has satisfied me of the propriety of teaching them "by compulsion" if necessary. For the Navy officer, whose calling takes him to all countries and among all people, no plan of education can be complete unless it contain at least one of three languages, either French, Spanish or German. I say the last, because of the richness both of the literature and science of that language.

But, sir, why "paint the lily?" or dwell on the advantages of education to any particular class? Their value to sailor and soldier, to farmer and mechanic; and even to that human machine, the operative of manufacturing establishments, is universally admitted. Therefore, like true philosophers, let us cast about to see if the cause of education may be advanced in the Navy, without prejudice in other respects to the interests of the State. If it may be, then it becomes us to consider in what manner and upon what principles a plan of education shall be organized, and how the greatest good may be effected with the smallest means. If the plan and course of instruction proposed be in conformity with these principles and adequate to such results, the system will carry with it its own recommendation, requiring from us neither credentials nor argument to commend it to the favorable consideration of the public. But before I go into detail of the school-ship plan, I must again invite your attention to the Navy Register; for statistics and figures are worth more than argument and opinion.

At page 38 et seq. is a list of the Passed Midshipmen in the Navy. This is a class of officers, to whom, according to the Rules and Regulations of the Navy, you recollect, "no particular duty can be assigned." To say the least of it, the policy of maintaining in the Navy a grade of officers to whom "no duty can be assigned," is of doubtful expediency. The existence of such a class is no proof of perfection in the organization of our present Naval system. Indeed, the retaining of such a grade in the service, is but a device for creating a *retired list* of Lieutenants; and at that unfortunate period too for the Navy, when the officers to be placed upon it are in the prime of life, enjoying all the freshness and energies of youth, with the vigor of manhood. Passed Midshipmen are Midshipmen, who, after having been a certain number of years in service, are examined by a board of Captains, and found qualified for the duties of a Lieutenant. Instead of being then promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, they are put upon half the pay of that grade, and kept there for six years before they are regularly promoted. The number of these at present is one hundred and ninety-one—of whom six are waiting orders; eleven sick and on temporary leave from duty; and one hundred and seventy-four are on duty. The pay of those on duty, including rations, amounts to $143,028 a year; and, of those off duty, the pay is $10,200—or, in round numbers, the government is at the yearly charge of $153,000 for the support of a non-descript class of officers, to whom "Regulations" can assign "no particular duties." Page 55 contains a list of Teachers and Professors of Mathematics, (fifteen of the former, and two of the latter,) whose pay and subsistence amounts annually to $20,380. The same Register exhibits a list of two hundred and thirty-one Midshipmen, at a yearly charge upon the public Treasury of $105,714. All of which, in round numbers, give $278,000, as the sum which it costs the government yearly to obtain an annual supply of only sixteen Lieutenants for the Navy.

Now, sir, if we consider that the number of Lieutenants admitted into the Navy for the last ten years, gives an average of sixteen a year—that these are supplied from the list of Passed Midshipmen, which is again recruited from the Midshipmen; and that to support these and their teachers it takes $278,000 yearly, you will be led to the startling result, that, under the system as it now exists, of training up officers for the service, it costs upwards of $18,000 to fit and qualify a Midshipman for the grade and duties of a Lieutenant. Observe that I take the ground that Midshipmen and Passed Midshipmen are maintained in service, not on account of their *present* usefulness, but on account of their *prospective* value to their country;

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for I consider that the true object of the government in supporting Midshipmen in the Navy, is the same for which Cadets are supported at West Point, viz. to prepare them, by a particular course of training, for the duties of their profession, and to fit them for the important trusts hereafter to be conferred upon them. And I think this the true light in which both Midshipmen and Cadets ought to be considered. It is not until a Midshipman becomes a Lieutenant that he begins to be useful as an officer. But this $18,000 does not include the whole expense of bringing him to this state. It is exclusive of mileage, pay for servants, cost of apartments, &c., which, if taken into the estimate, would swell the cost at which a Lieutenant is at *present* obtained for the Navy, to at least $20,000. I emphasize that word "present," because the operations of the system, as now organized, are such as greatly to increase the expense every year.

The Register of 1830 shows that there were then no Passed Midshipmen. I date the practical operation of the present system from that time. The first fifty, that head the list of Passed Midshipmen, have been in service from twelve to sixteen years. But taking twelve years as the present term of probation, and the statistics furnished by the last ten years for data, we find that every year forty-two Midshipmen are appointed—that thirty-eight are examined and found qualified for promotion, but that only sixteen are promoted; which gives twenty-two as the constant yearly addition to the list of Passed Midshipmen. Now, according to this rate of increase and promotion, if the present system be persevered in, the Midshipman who received his appointment in the Navy in 1839, will not be promoted before 1870. Thus he has before him a probationary term of thirty-one years of service; and, to bring him to the condition of a Lieutenant, will cost the government not less than $51,000. Here are the elements of the calculation, sir; make it for yourself. There are now in service one hundred and ninety-one Passed Midshipmen, seventeen Teachers and Professors, and two hundred and thirty-one Midshipmen, at the annual charge of $278,000. The list of Midshipmen and Professors is supposed to remain as it now is, while that of the Passed Midshipmen is increased twenty-two every year—which, in thirty-one years, will give six hundred and eighty-two Passed Midshipmen, at a pay of $546,000; to which, add $278,000 = $824,000, and divide by 16, the number promoted, and you have $51,000 as the cost at which the government is preparing to raise the Midshipman who now enters the service to the condition of Lieutenant.

And now, sir, what think you is the course of study to be pursued—or the plan of instruction laid down in this expensive system of procuring Lieutenants for the Navy? A practical knowledge of seamanship—for which three years at sea is considered sufficient by the "Regulations"—the manipulation of the Sextant—a few rules by rote in Bowditch's Epitome of Navigation—and a knowledge of right-angled plane trigonometry (for the "sailings" are nothing more than this.) A knowledge of any thing more than these, counts as nothing before the Board of Examiners. Such, sir, is the course of instruction, and such the price of tuition under the present system.

But there is another feature in this system far more hideous than this. By the time the Midshipman of to-day is promoted, and is put in a situation in which he can serve his country, and render a *quid pro quo*, he has passed the age of usefulness, and has become too old to do good service. But not looking into the dark future, and confining our views to things present, many of the Passed Midshipmen now in service, are older than several of our Captains were when they commanded ships in the last war, and gallantly won laurels for their country. The average age at which Midshipmen are appointed is seventeen, (the mean between the limits fourteen and twenty, at which they can be admitted into the service.) The first fifty to be promoted have been in the Navy more than twelve years—so that they are now two years older than our gallant Perry was when he gained his victory. What, sir, can be said of a system which trains up old men for young officers?

If, by any means, a plan were devised, by which, at the saving of time and expense in the building of ships, their construction should be so altered, as not only to render the ships more serviceable, but to increase their durability one-third or one-fourth over the present rates, would not such a plan be immediately adopted, and considered one of the greatest improvements of the day? In a national point of view, the *building* of officers, or, which is the same thing, the fitting them for the duties of their profession, is quite of as much importance as the building of ships. Under present arrangements, we have seen that it requires twelve years of preparation, at a cost of $18,000, with a prospective increase to thirty-one years, and a cost of $51,000, to bring an officer to that condition when he is first in a situation to render useful service to his country. And then after he obtains this position, if we estimate the average life of a sailor at fifty years—and statistics will show that this is a large estimate—we shall see that after so long a term of preparation, only twenty-one years of useful service remain to the country. Now if the probationary term be shortened, from twelve to six years, the term of useful and efficient service will be lengthened from twenty to twenty-seven years. If then, without detracting in the interim from the efficiency of the service, a system may be introduced, by which, in half the time, and with an actual saving of nine-tenths, or nineteen-twentieths of the expense, officers may be better qualified to

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render their country service; and if their period for usefulness may be lengthened nearly one-third—does not patriotism require it, as a public duty of those who have the power, to adopt such a system? And that it may be put in practice forthwith, we have only to put the Navy on a proper footing, by creating officers enough for our ships, and thenceforth make it a rule to regulate the supply by the demand for officers—that is, appoint Midshipmen enough each year to fill up, after allowing for casualties, the vacancies that annually occur in the list of Lieutenants. This being done, convert one of your ships that are now rotting in Norfolk, into a school-ship; give her in command of an officer of the Navy to act as tactician and be at the head of the school; lay down the course of instruction, and send there your Teachers and Midshipmen. I should prefer, too, Navy officers for the former. The latter, after two or three years, will come forth well grounded in all the branches of the profession, except practical seamanship; for which a three years' cruise at sea will be sufficient. When the Midshipman who has passed out of the school-ship returns from this cruise, let him be examined in seamanship by a board of Post-Captains, according to the present plan: if found qualified, let him be promoted immediately; and then the Navy will have for junior Lieutenants, officers of the age of 20 or 21, instead of men between 30 and 35 years of age.

I would recommend that this school-ship be kept regularly fitted for sea; and that she, or a smaller vessel, manned by the Midshipmen, take a cruise to sea of two or three months in the year, as well for exercise and relaxation as for the purpose of putting in practice what they had been taught while in port—firing at targets, and the like. Though I am in favor of a *liberal* education for the Navy officer, I should still be in favor of a school-ship under the direction of Navy officers, as an improvement upon the present system, were mathematics alone to comprise the whole course of study. I advocate, Mr. Editor, any change; for whatever that change be, it must necessarily serve as the entering wedge to improvement.

But, sir, mounted on my hobby, I have been riding at full tilt, forgetting that your patience may be exhausted; therefore, I forbear any further detail of the school-ship plan for the present. For many valuable suggestions on this subject, I am indebted to one of those gallant officers, who won our Naval victories. He is one of those, Mr. Editor, whose sound views and practical mind originated the idea in 1819, of defending our coast and harbors with steam batteries, and memorialized Congress on the subject. I have other scraps in the bag. I may send you them at another time; and, if you request it, enter fully into the detail of the school-ship plan. For the present, adieu. Yours,

H. B——,
United States Navy.

MICHAL,

SAUL'S DAUGHTER.*

A ROMANCE.

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CHAPTER I.

It was a bridal chamber, garnish'd forth
With gems, and gold, and purple, and rich wreaths;
Where the clear lily breath'd upon the breast
Of Sharon's velvet rose, and their perfume
Was mingling with the incense that stole forth
From humbler blossoms, sweet as childhood's pray'r.
Oh! what enchanting scenes
Of rich and varied beauty lay outspread
Beneath the windows, where the crimson folds
Of the rich tapestry were drawn aside
By chains of wreathen gold. The lovely vales,
With peaceful herds, and highly cultur'd fields;
The rich corn waving on the gentle slope;
The dark leav'd graceful olive, bending slow,
In adoration, as the breezes pass'd
Bearing its voice to heaven. The hill-side crown'd
With rich green vineyards, where a blessing dwelt:
The streamlets lying on the mountain's breast,
Like chains of sparkling diamonds, falling low
Into earth's lap the vallies, resting there
In glittering clusters, 'mid her robes of green.
The far-off Libanus with cedar plumes,
Nodding in heaven's blue mirror with the pride
Of a stanch warrior; while the smiling heaven
Look'd down complacently, like the blue eye
Of yielding beauty. The dim misty hills,
Where every crevic'd rock was wreath'd with bloom,
Inhabited, and stor'd with honeycombs;
While from the sycamore that bow'd and smil'd
To its own image in the mirror'd fount,
Gush'd swells of living bird-songs floating soft
Upon the living breeze, which came by fits,
Coquetting with the heavy tapestry
Of that fair marriage chamber.
Can it be
That there are aching hearts, and tearful eyes,
In such a chamber, 'mid such glorious scenes?
Alas, for all earth's grandeur, pomp, and pow'r,
Magnificence, and beauty! Seated there,
Enfolded fondly in each others arms,
Are Saul's two princely daughters. Ne'er did eye
Rest on a brighter pair. So fair, so young—
So form'd of beauty, grace, and majesty.
The one a bride deck'd out most gloriously
In regal splendor, while her dark clear eyes,
Though overflowing like a troubled spring,
Dwelt on her fair young sister with a look
Full of deep happiness, and joyful love;
As 'neath the ripples of the ruffled fount
Lies the reflection of the brilliant heaven.
Sister, she whispered, since the hour is come
That severs our communion, which has been
So perfect, and so sweet, wilt thou not now
Confide to me the sorrow which of late
Has liv'd amongst thy roses, eating still

* We call the attention of our readers to the above article, founded upon Scriptural incident, from the pen of a lady, who has heretofore contributed to the pages of the Messenger. The introductory lines, and other portions of the piece, indicate, we think, the possession of true poetic genius by the fair authoress, from whose pen we solicit a continuance of favors.—*Ed. Mess.*

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